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Tested by modern standards it was dreary and monotonous. About 1830 came the railroad, the opening of the granite quarries, the introduction of manufacturing, the influx of an alien population. The result has been the transformation of the old New England town into the suburb and then the city. The old institutions—the church, the school, the highway, the town meeting, the militia company—have passed away, or become so changed as to be scarcely recognizable. Taken altogether, the story is a most interesting sociological study, especially that part of it which relates to the town meeting.

The earnest desire of the student must be that the work which Mr. Adams has done for his native town may find many imitators. It is only through the study of local and state histories that the real nature of our democratic society can be understood.

HERBERT L. OSGOOD.

The Life of Thomas Paine. By MONCURE DANIEL CONWAY.

New York and London, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1892. — 2 vols., 8vo, xviii, 380, 489 pp.

Of all who were prominent in the great revolutionary upheaval of last century Thomas Paine is undoubtedly one of those most worthy of receiving our attention. He was a living witness of the unity of the revolution which shook both worlds. The author of *Common Sense*, that pamphlet which in January, 1776, prepared the way for the Declaration of Independence, the friend of Franklin, of Washington and of Jefferson, became sixteen years later the friend of Condorcet, of Brissot, of Gensonné, of Vergniaud, and with them, in the character of a delegate to the National Convention, drafted the first plan of a republican constitution which was submitted to that famous assembly. His chief work, *The Rights of Man*, was a formal defense of both the American and the French Declaration of Rights.

Had Paine confined his attention to the study of political science, he would probably long since have found a biographer who would have done justice to his fame. But he was a Quaker, of the philosophical sort, and soon became a bold and combative freethinker. In a pamphlet written during the Terror, when he was detained as a prisoner in the Luxemburg, he assailed the Bible with unprecedented violence, denouncing it as the work of Satan and attacking the holiest dogmas of Christianity. The *Age of Reason*, with its various continuations,

so shocked the minds of his contemporaries, especially in England and America, that he lost most of his former friends. When he returned to the United States nearly all doors were closed to him. Jefferson, then the first magistrate of his country, remained among the faithful few, but so strong had become the current of opinion against Paine, that the president was obliged to keep him at a distance. To the generation which knew nothing of his services in "the times that tried men's souls," old Tom Paine appeared a kind of incarnate devil. His enemies assailed him unopposed. With the sole exception of the biographical sketch which his friend Rickman devoted to him, the lives of Paine are controversial pamphlets in which legend takes the place of fact. The statements made are drawn mostly from the libels of Francis Oldys (George Chalmers) and James Cheetham. Of these writers, the former is strongly suspected of having been paid by Lord Hawksbury for blackening Paine's reputation; while the latter had become a personal enemy during the last years of his life.

Mr. Conway has now undertaken to restore Thomas Paine to the place he deserves in the pantheon of the Revolution. The author's sympathy with his subject is strong, and grows as his task proceeds. But this feeling, while fruitful, is responsible at the same time for the chief defect of the work. One of the features of Paine's character is that he is always self-satisfied. He never acknowledges himself to be at fault. Whatever he may have done, said or thought, is well done, well said, well thought. With perfect ingenuousness he will close an argument saying: "This is my opinion . . . It is consistent with the reason that God has given me, and I gratefully know that he has bestowed on me a large share of that divine gift." Such a character is dangerous to a sympathetic biographer, especially if he has undertaken a literary rescue. The subject of his treatment is likely to become his hero. It is so in this case. In redressing the wrongs that have been done to Paine's memory, Mr. Conway has claimed for him a position which posterity—even posterity better informed—will not concede to him. Paine was certainly not the devil; but he was no demigod. One may have served a great cause and have been a victim of the narrowness of men, without being a Prometheus. One may have been a powerful pioneer of political emancipation, one may have fought and won in the literary battle for the rights of the people, without being entitled to be called a "founder of republics." Paine, as editor of the *Pennsylvania Magazine*, ventilated indeed some ideas which had not been previously formulated

in America. He cannot, however, be considered as a discoverer in the sphere of political principles. The main ideas to which he lent the color of his style were born long before him in England and in the colonies which were settled by non-conformist refugees. They were the intellectual legacy from his Puritan and Quaker ancestors. Paine was a boy at Thetford School (Norfolk) when Jonathan Mayhew preached in the West Meeting-house of Boston his renowned sermon against the tyranny of kings like Charles I (February 4, 1749-50). He was still an officer of excise at Lewes (Sussex) when two friends of Mayhew, James Otis and Samuel Adams, brought forward at Faneuil Hall, amidst the applause of the people, the first declaration of the natural rights of the colonists (November 20, 1772). Democracy was already a reality in New England before Paine had thought of crossing the Atlantic. It was only about the time he departed for the New World, at the end of 1774, that he began to take an interest in politics. This is according to his own statements. Upon his arrival in Philadelphia he for the first time adopted literary pursuits as a means of livelihood, and as editor of a magazine gave utterance to the principles of a revolution which had already begun.

If the enthusiasm of Mr. Conway for his hero has sometimes led him out of the paths of calm criticism and unbiased comment, it has also carried him through a long series of painstaking researches for which every student of modern history ought to be thankful. His inquiry has been carefully conducted among English and French as well as American archives. Numerous and valuable materials have been brought to light—letters, diaries, documents of every kind. His comparison of American and French sources has produced most interesting results. Here is an instance. It was already known that Paine, being a representative in the National Convention from Pas-de-Calais, was arrested after the fall of the Girondists, and that he remained ten months in prison. The note-book of Robespierre, which was seized with his other papers on the 9th of Thermidor, contained this entry: "Demand that the decree of accusation be issued against Thomas Payne, as well for the interests of America as for those of France." Courtois, the chairman of the committee on Robespierre's papers, who made of his report to the Convention a posthumous indictment against the Jacobin leader, explained these words by saying: "Why Thomas Payne more than another? Because he helped to establish the liberty of both worlds." After a careful examination of all obtainable documents in France and in the United States, Mr. Conway has succeeded in giving the real mean-

ing of Robespierre's memorandum, *viz.* that America had an interest in Paine's arrest because it had been suggested to the French leaders by Gouverneur Morris, the resident minister of the United States. Morris's desire to commit the United States to an English alliance and his jealousy of Paine's influence both in France and in America were at the bottom of the matter.

In the chapters relating to Paine's connection with the French Revolution Mr. Conway relies too much on the authority of Louis Blanc. However important and full of information the latter's work may be, it has for its object another historical rescue, and that no easy one, *viz.* the vindication of Robespierre. Such a book ought to be familiar to everyone who desires more than a superficial knowledge of French revolutionary history, but it ought not to be blindly followed. Depending implicitly upon Blanc's judgment, Mr. Conway sometimes ventures beyond him and reaches conclusions which the vindicator of the Jacobins himself would not have ventured to support. So it is for instance that Mr. Conway is found referring to "the massacre of the Marseillaise by the king's Swiss guards," on the 10th of August, 1792. That "massacre" was the work of 800 infantry, life guards, who, with but little ammunition, stood against a multitude that was well armed and provided with artillery. Of the 800 soldiers, one-half died fighting before the palace of the Tuileries, which they had sworn to protect. The rest, who laid down their arms in obedience to the orders of a feeble, frightened king, were almost all slaughtered either on the spot by the mob, or soon after in the Paris prisons. The losses of those who attacked the royal residence have been fixed by Mortimer Ternaux, after careful examination, at 74 dead and 53 wounded. The first centennial of the heroic fate of Louis XVI's last defenders has recently been commemorated at Luzerne (Switzerland). No doubt Mr. Conway's high sense of truth and justice will cause him to modify his judgment respecting this event, when he reads the various contemporaneous accounts of those bloody days. They are collected in Mr. W. F. von Mülinen's memorial, *Das Französische Schweizer-Garde Regiment am 10. August, 1792* (Luzerne, 1892).

But whatever the particular shortcomings of Mr. Conway's work, it is certainly one of the most important among recent contributions to the history of revolutionary times, and it is sure to be studied with profit on both sides of the Atlantic.

CHARLES BORGEAUD.